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SENT VIA E-MAIL AND U. S. MAIL

MEMORANDUM

TO: Service List, Area Code Conservation, D. T. E. 98-38

FROM: Karl en J. Reed, Hearing Offi cer

DATE: October 7, 1999

RE: Hearing Offi cer Ruling: (1) Suspending the Procedural Schedule; and (2) Seeking Initial Comments on Bell Atlantic's Sept. 24 Feasibility Analysis by October 29, 1999.

CC: Mary Cottrell, Secretary
Commi ssi on

Ladi es and Gentl emen:

Attached is the Hearing Offi cer ruling that: (1) suspends the Procedural Schedule; and (2) requests initial comments on Bell Atlantic's Sept. 24 Feasibility Analysis by October 29, 1999. Should you have any questions regarding this ruling, please contact me directly at 617-305-3619.

/s/_____

Karl en J. Reed, Hearing Offi cer

COMMONWEALTH OF MASSACHUSETTS

DEPARTMENT OF TELECOMMUNICATIONS AND ENERGY

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Investigation by the Department of Telecommunications)
and Energy on its own motion to determine the need for)
new area codes in Eastern Massachusetts and whether) D.T.E. 98-38
measures could be implemented to conserve exchange)
codes within Eastern Massachusetts.)

HEARING OFFICER RULING SUSPENDING THE PROCEDURAL SCHEDULE;

SEEKING INITIAL COMMENTS ON BELL ATLANTIC'S SEPTEMBER 24, 1999 FEASIBILITY ANALYSIS
BY OCTOBER 29, 1999.

On September 24, 1999, Bell Atlantic-Massachusetts ("Bell Atlantic") filed its preliminary Feasibility Analysis of the Attorney General's Proposed Rate Center Consolidation ("RCC") Plans ("Feasibility Analysis"). Bell Atlantic states that it is continuing its analysis of business data and is expected to complete the business portion of this analysis and submit the updated study to the Department by mid-October (Feasibility Analysis at 2). Bell Atlantic notes that the Feasibility Analysis's conclusions are based on numerous assumptions, some of which are caused by the limited amount of time (three months) granted by the Department to conduct the study (id. at 1, 2, 3, 5, 6, 11). Bell Atlantic asserts that additional time for analysis is needed to create definitive assessments of the revenue and customer impacts (id. at 11).

Bell Atlantic also states that currently it can not estimate the impact of the RCC plans on the exhaust dates of the 508, 617, 781, and 978 area codes if the Department implements thousands block number pooling trials as authorized by the Federal Communications Commission ("FCC") in its recent number pooling order for Massachusetts. Consequently, Bell Atlantic's preliminary analysis assumes there will be no impact (Feasibility Analysis at 7, fn. 11).

According to the existing procedural schedule, the parties are required to submit discovery on the Findings no later than October 8, 1999, and an evidentiary hearing is set to commence on November 16, 1999. The FCC's Order allows the Department to require all local number portability-capable carriers to participate in a thousands block number pooling trial (Order at 7). The Hearing Officer finds that the current procedural schedule must be altered to allow the Department time to consider its number pooling options. The Hearing Officer also finds that an initial round of comments on the Feasibility Analysis will be useful to the Department's consideration of this docket. Accordingly, the procedural schedule is hereby suspended and the evidentiary hearing set for November 16-19, 1999, is postponed. Additionally, the Department will accept initial comments on Bell Atlantic's September 24, 1999 Feasibility Analysis no later than 5:00 p.m. Friday, October 29,

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1999. A revised procedural schedule will be issued at a later time. Bell Atlantic is expected to complete the business portion of the analysis and submit an updated analysis as indicated in its September 24, 1999 filing.

10/7/99 /s/_____

Date Karlen J. Reed, Hearing Officer